THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI): (a) Sanctions are generally accorded or refused within the precribed time limit of three months. Detailed guidelines for checking delay in grant of sanction for prosecution have been issued by the Government in November, 2006.

(b) The Government considers cases for accord of sanction for prosecution of Government employees in accordance with the provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988.

(c) In regard to the proposals for accord of sanction submitted by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), 7 cases were pending with the respective competent authorities for over one year as on 31.12.2007, as reported by the CBI.

Filling of backlog vacancies

2255. SHRI GANDHI AZAD: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the details of backlog vacancies that are still not filled in by several Departments;

(b) by when these vacancies would be filled in through Special Recruitment Drive;

(c) whether it is a fact that now a days highly qualified and eligible SC/ST candidates are available in the Open Market/Departments;

(d) whether it is also a fact that some Departments still say that "eligible/suitable SC/ST are not available";

(e) if so, the solution for this with Government; and

(f) the kinds of efforts that are being made by Government to sort out these problems?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI): (a) and (b) Various Ministries/Departments had identified 60,845 backlog reserved vacancies of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes which could be filled up. 53,444 of these vacancies have already been filled up by launching a Special Recruitment Drive.

(c) to (f) Direct recruitment to a post is made from amongst the candidates who apply for the post and promotion to a post is made from amongst the candidates available in the consideration zone. Eligible and suitable SC/ST candidates, sometimes, do not apply or are not available within the zone of consideration or the extended zone of consideration.

Backlog of vacancies

†2256. SHRI MANGANI LAL MANDAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that still a number of posts for SC/ST and OBC are lying vacant in Central Government and its undertakings/Establishments/Institutions including the All India Services;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Government has decided to clear the backlog of reserved vacancies speedily; and

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI): (a) Some posts reserved for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other Backward Classes remain vacant from time to time for reasons like non-availability of suitable candidates belonging to these categories.

(b) and (c) A Special Recruitment Drive was launched to fill up the backlog reserved vacancies of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. About 53,444 backlog vacancies have filled up through this Drive.

Appointment of welfare officers

2257. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are any guidelines for the appointment of welfare officers by the Central Government particularly in Delhi;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, whether there is any proposal to have the same so as to ensure that the welfare officers once appointed continue without any time limit and upto death;

(d) whether it is a fact that these officers do not submit any reports of the welfare activities undertaken and the appointment is only for personal interest; and

(e) if so, the steps that are proposed to make such officers really useful and to limit their appointments till a particular age and tenure and according to their usefulness?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In Ministries/Departments, an officer of the level of Under Secretary is nominated as Welfare Officer. The guidelines for Area Welfare Officers include that their tenure shall be for two years normally and he should be a resident of the area.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) The Welfare Officers are appointed by the concerned Ministries/Departments for coordinating and monitoring welfare activities during the office hours. The Area Welfare Officers send reports on the matters referred to them from time to time by the Government.

(e) Does not arise.

Period of *ad-hoc* promotion

2258. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that as per DOPT guideline *ad-hoc* promotion can be made for a maximum period of one year;

(b) if so, whether *ad-hoc* promotee can continue in service after one year without further specific approval of DOPT;